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DEPARTMENT FOR M, L, NEA/FO AND NEA/SCA/EX

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: APER PREL AMGT MU  
SUBJECT: OMAN: SAME-SEX DOMESTIC PARTNER ACCREDITATION

REF: 10 STATE 788; 10 ABU DHABI 154

¶11. (SBU) In response to reftel, the DCM met January 20 with the MFA's Muhammad al-Khusaibi (please protect), head of the Americas desk and former Omani Ambassador to the United States to discuss informally the sensitive topic of the Omani reaction to a prospective request for accreditation of the same-sex domestic partner of U.S. Embassy personnel as members of the family. The DCM opened the conversation by providing Khusaibi a copy of the Diplomatic Circular of November 4, 2009, announcing the Department's initiative. The DCM approached Khusaibi precisely because his background positions him to appreciate the sensitivities from both the U.S. and Omani perspectives.

¶12. (SBU) Khusaibi reviewed the text. The DCM then briefed reftel points, noting that the MFA deals with the issue of same-sex partners in an unofficial yet constructive way, and asking how an official approach might be received. In this context, Khusaibi responded by advising against a formal accreditation request. He asked that the DCM "read between the lines" and then stated that such a request "would be very difficult for Oman to deal with...we wouldn't know what to do with it." He further explained that the cultural and legal questions raised may be irresolvable.

¶13. (SBU) COMMENT: Post has a successful track record in obtaining legal residency for same-sex domestic partners, if handled in a discreet way with the MFA. This conversation confirms our belief, however, that an official approach would place the MFA at odds with Oman's welcoming yet essentially conservative Islamic mores and is unlikely to be successful, while possibly risking damage to the informal process that is currently in effect. END COMMENT.  
Schmierer